



STATE OF TENNESSEE
BUREAU of TENNCARE
729 Church Street
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37247-6501

March 8, 2004

TennCare participating pharmacists:

Beginning March 15, 2004 The TennCare Bureau and First Health Services will modify its procedures for verification of DEA numbers when pharmacy claims are submitted. This modification is a two-step process that will be implemented during the next two months. When fully implemented, these changes will help the Bureau ensure prescriber DEA numbers are accurate and valid when claims are presented for payment.

Effective Monday, March 15, First Health Services will begin checking the algorithm for DEA numbers on pharmacy claims when they are presented to TennCare via the First Health Services online system. As you know, the DEA number has a 'checksum' edit which verifies that the structure of the number itself is valid. If a prescription is transmitted on or after March 15 the claim will deny if it contains a DEA number which fails the algorithm check. The claim will reject with a denial code of 25 "Practitioner ID format invalid". Please correct the DEA number and resubmit the claim.

The second step in this process modification takes effect on April 15. Beginning that Thursday, DEA numbers submitted on claims to TennCare via First Health Services will be checked against the National Technical Information Services (NTIS) database. The Bureau and First Health Services obtains an updated database from NTIS each month to ensure accuracy of DEA information. If a prescription is transmitted with a DEA number that fails the comparison w/the NTIS database the claim will deny. The claim will reject with a denial code of 56 "Non-matched prescriber ID". Please correct the DEA number and resubmit the claim.

The TennCare pharmacy staff is available to assist if you are unable to obtain a correct DEA number after a submitted claim is denied. Please call the TennCare pharmacy program at (888) 816-1680 to obtain the correct DEA number. We will ask for verification of your pharmacy's NCPDP number prior to providing the DEA number.

Moving to this standardized process for DEA numbers on claims will help the TennCare Bureau ensure that only valid and appropriate claims are processed for TennCare enrollees. If you have any questions about this modification process, or if you experience problems after March 15 (other than obtaining correct DEA numbers), please call First Health Services at (866) 434-5520.